

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 /093 W

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R 250450Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 169

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OTTA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 9997

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PORG, AORG, AFIN, LA

SUBJECT: ICC/LAOS - INDIAN VIEW FROM NEW DELHI

REF: A. VIENTIANE 4794 B. VIENTIANE 4922

1. IN A CONVERSATION WITH AN EMBASSY OFFICER JULY 24 MEA DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE EAST ASIA DIVISION N.R. VARMA (MOST RECENT ASSIGNMENT AT THE INDIAN EMBASSY, VIENTIANE) INDICATED THAT THE GOI HAD NOT YET REACHED A DEFINITIVE OPINION REGARDING THE CONTINUANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION FOR LAOS. IT WAS CLEAR FROM VARMA THAT THE INDIANS WERE WAITING FOR THE OTHER POWERS TO CLARIFY THEIR OWN THINKING ON THE QUESTION. ACCORDING TO VARMA, SOUVANA PHOUMA AND VONGVICHIT HAD MADE CLEAR TO THE INDIANS THAT THEY WISHED THE ICC TO CONTINUE IN EXISTENCE AT LEAST

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UNTIL THE ELECTIONS, WHICH VARMA SAID MIGHT TAKE PLACE EARLIER

THAN SOME ORIGINALLY ANTICIPATED. VARMA ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE ICC NOW HAD LITTLE TO DO, AND IN ANY EVENT WOULD HAVE TO TAILOR ITS FUTURE OPERATIONS TO THE NEW CONDITIONS. HE BELIEVED HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD REPLACE AMBASSADOR CHAREKHAN WITH AN OFFICIAL OF EQUIVALENT RANK, BUT HE SAID HE HAD NO IDEA WHO MIGHT BE APPOINTED (REF A). VARMA WAS LESS CERTAIN ABOUT A REPLACEMENT FOR BRIGADIER PATHANIA. THIS WOULD DEPEND ON DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NEXT MONTHS (REF B).

2. IN PRESENTING THE GOI'S VIEWS VARMA SOUGHT TO DOWNPLAY THE IMPACT WHICH ANY INDIAN OPINION MIGHT HAVE ON A FINAL DECISION ON THE ICC, AND EMPHASIZED THAT THE TWO CO-CHAIRMEN, THE UK AND THE USR, SHOULD BETTER CONFRONT AND DECIDE THIS QUESTION. VARMA WAS MOST INTERESTED HOWEVER IN THE USG POSITION AND REQUESTED SEVERAL TIMES THAT HE BE ADVISED OF ANY DEVELOPMENT IN THIS REGARD. HE WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN WHETHER THE USG WOULD CONTINUE ITS FINANCIAL SUPPORT. IF THE USG AND OTHERS STEPPED ASIDE IN THIS REGARD, THEN OF COURSE THE ENTIRE OPERATION WOULD HAVE TO BE CLOSED DOWN.

3. IN CONCLUSION VARMA EXPRESSED HIMSELF "PERSONALLY" IN FAVOR OF CONTINUING THE ICC AT LEAST THROUGH THIS YEAR. HE SAID IT WAS NOT WITHOUT IMPORTANCE THAT THE LAOTIAN LEADERS WANTED THE INSTITUTION TO CONTINUE FOR THE PRESENT. HE ALSO THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE A PITY IF THE ICC STAFF WERE TO BE ABRUPTLY TERMINATED AFTER SOME THIRTEEN YEARS OF WORK.

4. COMMENT: IN VIEW OF VARMA'S FUZZY CONCLUDING REMARKS WE ARE LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THE INDIANS WILL FAVOR THE CONTINUANCE OF ICC/LAOS BUT WON'T RISK TAKING THE LEAD ON THIS QUESTION. SAXBE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PEACE OBSERVATION MISSIONS, FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, RESOLUTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NEWDE09997
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750256-0753
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750721/aaaaatchn.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 VIENTIANE 4794, 75 VIENTIANE 4922
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <22 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ICC/LAOS - INDIAN VIEW FROM NEW DELHI
TAGS: MARR, PORG, AORG, AFIN, LA, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006